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I

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM
YEAR TO YEAR."

All the Year Round

a
Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

NO. 14. NEW SERIES

SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 1869.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

WRECKED IN PORT.

A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II. CHAPTER IV.

He loves me; he loves me not.

THE interest which Walter Joyce had awakened in Lady Caroline Mansergh on the night of the dinner party, by no means died out, or even waned. Flirtation is certainly not an exceptional amusement in the dead level of dreary occupations which a country-house life affords, but this word-pastime was certainly not flirtation. The notion of flirting with her brother's secretary, which would have been exceedingly comic to the rest of the world, and afforded a vast deal of amusement to the kindly noodle portion of the Westhope society, did not strike Lady Caroline at all in a ridiculous light; but to flirt with Walter Joyce she knew would be impossible. The sighing and looking, the giving and taking, the fetching and carrying, and all the poodle tricks which are played by the best style of male flirts, in the best style of society, she knew would be impossible to him; and though she had had long practice in the art, and had derived no little amusement from it, she felt it would be repulsive to her to try her hand on such a subject. If not a desire for flirtation, what was it that irresistibly impelled her to seek this man's society; that made her start and thrill at the unexpected sound of his voice; that enabled her to picture to herself so vividly certain expressions in his eyes, gestures of his hands, to recal phrases of his conversation? Was it real passion? Had love come to her at last? Was this the man with whom her fate was to be for ever bound up? Lady Caroline half smiled as

she contemplated this tremendous possibility. It was too wild, too romantic, this story of the Lord of Burleigh, with the sexes reversed, and with herself for heroine; the man was different from those with whom her life had been passed, had brains and courage to use them, did not think the society thoughts nor speak the society language, and was not conformable in any way to the society pattern. That was what it meant. That was the source of the strange interest she felt in him—interest which was friendly and appreciative, but nothing further.

Nothing further. That was why she had manoeuvred, carefully, skilfully, and with perfect feminine tact, never ceasing until the object was accomplished, that it was understood that Mr. Joyce joined the family circle always after dinner, whether there were visitors or not; that was why she invariably found opportunities to have him seated by her side, or standing by her, turning over the pages of her music, while Lord Hetherington, with a dexterity only acquired by long practice, held up the newspaper before him, being at the time sound asleep, and her ladyship, scorning concealment, slumbered placidly in the garish light of the moderator lamp. Nothing further. That was why Lady Caroline had suddenly taken to pedestrian exercise, wanted an escort occasionally to the village, and hated the idea of being followed about in the country by a footman; found she had quite forgotten that charming Shakespeare, and determined to read his dear plays again, and would not trouble Mr. Joyce to send those heavy big volumes from the library, but would come in and read them there occasionally, if he was quite sure she did not disturb him. The jealous tortures endured by the valiant

Othello, which Lady Caroline selected for her first Shakespearian reading, apparently did not interest her very much. The great family history of the Wests, derived from ancient chronicles and documents, upon which Lord Hetherington's secretary was engaged, made but little progress on the occasions of her ladyship's visits. There were the longest and the pleasantest talks. In Caroline Mansergh's hands Joyce was as pliable as potter's clay. In less than a week after the dinner party he had told her the history of his life, made her acquainted with his hopes and fears, his wishes and aspirations. Of course she heard about his engagement to Marian, equally of course that was the part of the story in which she felt, and showed, the greatest interest. Very quickly she knew it all. Under her skilful questioning, Joyce not merely told her what had actually occurred, but opened to her the secret chambers of his heart, and displayed to her penetrating sense feelings, with the existence of which he himself was scarcely acquainted. The odd, uncomfortable sensation which first came over him in his last walk with Marian round the school garden, when she spoke of how it might have been better if they had never met, and how poorly armed he was for the great conflict of life; the renewal of the sting with its bitterness increased fifty-fold at the receipt of her letter dilating on the luxury of Woolgreaves, and her dread of the poverty which they would have to encounter; the last hint given to him in the worldly advice contained in Jack Byrne's letter—all these were submitted to Lady Caroline's keen powers of dissection, without Walter's being in the least aware how much of his inner life he had made patent to her. A look, a nod, a word here or there, begat, increased, and developed his assurance of sympathy; and he could have talked till all eternity on the subject dearest to his heart. Lady Caroline let him talk, and only starred the dialogue with occasional interjections, always of a sympathising character. When she was alone, she would sit for hours reviewing the conversation just past in the minutest detail, weighing and re-weighing sentences and even words which Joyce had spoken, sifting, balancing, ascribing to such and such influences, putting aside such and such theories, bringing all her feminine wits—and in the great points of feminine cleverness, an odd common sense, and an undefinable blundering on to the right, she had no superior—to the solution of the

question of Walter Joyce's future so far as Marian Ashurst was concerned. Whatever conclusion she may have arrived at she kept to herself; no one ever had the slightest glimmering of it. Her talks with Walter Joyce were as numerous as ever, her interest in his career no less, her delight in his society by no means impaired; but the name of Miss Ashurst never passed Lady Caroline's lips, and whenever she saw the conversation necessarily veering that way, she invariably struck it out into some new channel. Not that Lady Caroline Mansergh had any jealousy of this "simple maiden in her flower;" she would not have allowed that for an instant, would not have allowed, in her most secret communings with herself, that such a thing could be possible; for she had been properly and rigidly brought up in the Belgravian code of morals, though a little inclined to kick against them now, and think for herself; and the Belgravian code of morals holds the cultivation of the bienséances as the most essential portion of a young lady's curriculum, and the bienséances effectively ignore the existence of any such low sentiment as jealousy in the minds of perfectly constituted members of the upper classes. Not that Walter Joyce would have noticed the display of any such passion as jealousy, or, as Lady Caroline thought rather ruefully, could allow any such feeling to be excited in him. In all her experience—and it had been large—she had never come across a man so completely—Well, she could scarcely find a term for it. It was not apathetic, because he was bright, and intelligent, and earnest. Perhaps confiding was the best word to use, so far as his relations with Marian were concerned, though, as Lady Caroline felt, those relations were a little dashed with recent doubt; and as for his feelings with regard to herself, skilled mistress as she was in the art of such wordy warfare, Lady Caroline could never trap him into an ambushade, or force him into anything like an acknowledgment of a liking for her. It was not for the want of trying to evoke it, not for lack of given opportunity on her part, that this avowal never was made. Fortune favoured her, notably on one occasion; and if Walter Joyce had ever contemplated anything beyond a feeling of pleasant friendship for Lady Caroline Mansergh, he would have availed himself of that occasion for expressing it. Thus it came about. Lady Caroline was sitting half buried in a big soft easy chair before

the library fire, presumably enjoying Othello, but really watching her brother's secretary, who was busily transcribing from a big black-letter volume before him some of the glorious deeds of her remote ancestry. Raising his eyes after one of his pen-dips, Joyce met Lady Caroline's glance fixed straight upon him, and said :

"Thinking of Iago's subtlety, Lady Caroline, or Desdemona's innate weakness? The former, I should say, judging from your expression."

"My expression must be very poor, then, Mr. Joyce, or your powers of reading expression must be extremely limited. I was thinking of something totally different."

"May one ask of what?" He had had a long day at the chronicles of the West family, and a little relief was absolutely necessary.

"Oh dear yes, my thoughts were certainly not to be marked 'confidential' or even 'private.' I was thinking about our going back to town."

"Oh indeed! Is that imminent?"

"I should say certainly. Parliament meets within a fortnight, and West, I mean Lord Hetherington, never misses that. Lady Hetherington won't let him go alone, and once in Beaufort-square, I suppose they'll stop on."

"I suppose so. This house will seem wonderfully different when you have all left it."

"Naturally. Deserted houses must be different to those filled with company, though their actual appearance is of course only known to the housekeeper who is left in them, and housekeepers seldom give their impressions to the world."

"If you are interested in the subject, perhaps you will permit me to give you a faithful photograph of Westhope in its dismantled state."

"Evolved from your inner consciousness, like the German's idea of the camel?"

"On the contrary, drawn in the minutest detail from personal observation. The exact position of the pen which Lord Hetherington threw down after signing his last cheque for Mr. Deacon, the steward, the state of the withering hothouse flowers left by her ladyship on her table in the drawing-room, the vacant chair in the library once filled by——"

"Thanks, that's enough! I won't trouble you to be poetical, Mr. Joyce, that will be wanted one day at Helmingham, I suppose, and it's never wise to be extravagant with

one's ideas. But you don't mean to say you think you will be left behind here, at Westhope, when the family returns to town?"

"Assuredly, Lady Caroline! How else should I be able to make any progress with my work?"

"I think you will find," said Lady Caroline, with a smile, "that the history of our family, wonderfully interesting as it doubtless is, and anxiously expected by the literary world, as it necessarily must be, will have to remain in abeyance for a little time. The fact is, that Lord Hetherington has been recently much struck with the levelling and democratic spirit of the age, and has determined, so far as he is able, to stem the torrent. He will need a certain amount of assistance before bringing the matter before the House of Lords, and for that assistance I know he looks to you!"

He was a trying man, this Mr. Joyce. There was a scarcely suppressed gleam of fun in Lady Caroline's usually earnest eyes, that ought to have conveyed to any man acquainted with the circumstances of the position, the fact that this new combination had been suggested by her, and by her alone, and that she perfectly appreciated not merely its serviceable but its ludicrous side. Walter Joyce appreciated neither. He should of course be ready to give his services in whatever way they might be required, he said; adding, with clumsy candour, that he had been almost looking forward to the time of the family's departure, for the additional facilities which would be afforded him in getting on with his work.

This was too much for Lady Caroline. A flush passed across her cheek, as she said: "It has been Lady Hetherington's accidental, and by no means wilful error, Mr. Joyce, that your time has been already so much intruded on! We have, unfortunately for us no doubt, been unaccustomed to the ways of recluses, and have preposterously imagined that a little society might be more agreeable to them than——" But here she stopped, catching sight of the troubled expression on his face, of his downcast eyes and twitching lips. There was silence for a moment, but he soon mastered his emotion.

"I see plainly that I have blundered, as was not unnatural that I should, through the lack of power of expressing myself clearly. Believe me, Lady Caroline, that I am infinitely indebted to Lord and Lady Hetherington, and to you especially. Yes,

indeed, for I know where the indebtedness lies—more especially to you for all the kindness you have shown me, and the notice you have taken of me. And I—I intended——”

“Will you prove the truth of your protestations by never saying another word on the subject? The give-and-take principle has been carried out in our society as much as the most ardent democrat, say yourself, Mr. Joyce, could have desired. I am sure you are too good-natured to mourn over the hours torn from your great work, and frittered away in frivolous conversation, when you know that you have helped Lady Hetherington and myself to undergo an appalling amount of country people; and that while the dead Wests may grieve over the delay in the publication of their valour and virtue, the living Wests are grateful for assistance rendered them in their conflict with the bores. However, all that is nearly at an end. When the family is at Hetherington House, I have no doubt you will be enabled to enjoy the strictest seclusion. Meantime, there is only one festivity that I know of, which is likely to cause us to ask you to tear yourself away from your chronicles.”

“And that is——?”

“A skating party. Consequently dependent on the state of the weather. So that if you are still hermit-ically inclined, you had better pray for a thaw. If the frost holds like this, we are anticipating a very pleasant afternoon to-morrow, the people from the barracks and some others are coming over, the men report the ice in capital order, and there’s to be luncheon and that kind of thing. But perhaps, after all, you don’t skate, Mr. Joyce?”

“Oh yes, indeed—and you?”

“Nothing in the world I’m so fond of, or, if I may say so, that I do so well. We wintered one year in Vienna, there was a piece of water privately enclosed called the Schwann Spiegel, where the Emperor—never mind!”

The next day was very bright and very pleasant. Whether Walter Joyce had prayed for a thaw or not, it is certain that the frost of the previous night had been very mild as compared with its immediate predecessors; the wind had shifted round to the south-west, the sun had actual warmth, and weatherwise people assumed to notice a certain dun effect of the atmosphere, and therefrom to presage snow. The notion of the skating party about to take place had been received with immense delight at the

barracks at Brocksopp, and at the various houses to which invitations had been forwarded. To exhibit themselves in becoming costume a little removed from ordinary everyday dress, was in itself a delight to the younger members of society, while the elders, independently of their gratification in being brought personally into contact with the Lord-Lieutenant of the county, knew the capabilities of the Westhope cellar and kitchen, and recognised the fact that luncheon under such auspices meant something more than sandwiches and cheap sherry. The gathering was held on a large sheet of water, which was a pond, but which, being situate in the Westhope domain, profited by the generally aristocratic nature of its surroundings and was called a lake, lying about half a mile from the house. A large tent had been pitched on the bank, and as of course it was impossible to have any regular sit-down luncheon, refreshments were perpetually going on, “snacks” were indulged in between the performance of wild evolutions given out to be quadrilles, and gone through to the music of the military band, which, with very blue cheeks and very stiff fingers, was playing on the bank, and the consumption of liquids, from champagne in tumblers to curaçoa in wine glasses, was tremendous.

The party from Westhope had driven down in a break, in which a seat had been offered to Walter Joyce by Lady Hetherington herself, who had condescended to visit the library for the express purpose. It happened, however, that the secretary was specially engaged on an important letter, which it was necessary should be despatched that day, so that he was compelled to ask to be allowed to find his own way to the lake. When he arrived, there was already a large gathering, the bank was lined with spectators, and there was a tolerably large number of skaters. Lord Hetherington, wrapped in an enormous fur coat, with a hood hanging half-way down his back, was standing looking on with a somewhat melancholy expression. It had just occurred to him that skating was a pleasant pastime, that to skate well was a thing of which a man might reasonably be proud; at the same time he realised the fact that it was a thing impossible to be done by proxy—he could not get any man to skate for him and give him the credit of it. Colonel Tapp, cleaner shaved and waxier moustached than ever, stood by his lordship. The colonel did not skate, not that he could not; in his youth he had

been a proficient in the art, but he was not in his youth now, and was so strapped, and busked, and laced into his various garments, outer and inner, that he feared if by mischance he fell it might either be impossible for him to get up at all, or something might give way and cause him to be raised in a limp and unrepresentable condition. Mr. Biscoe had no such qualms, and was buckling on his skates with all his characteristic impetuosity — old-fashioned skates, cumbrous with woodwork, and with curly tops, very different from the light and elegant trifles in which handsome little Mr. Boyd was performing all sorts of figures before the countess and a group of ladies gathered together on the bank, and trying to look as if they were interested and amused.

"Charmin' scene!" said Lord Hetherington, surveying the lake in a birdlike fashion, with his head on one side — "charmin', quite! Whenever I see ice and that kind of thing, always reminds me of some humorous adventures I once read in a book, 'bout man on the ice, Pickwinkle, or some such name. 'Commonly humorous book, to be sure!" and his lordship laughed very heartily at his reminiscences.

"You mean Pickwick, my lord!" said the colonel. "Ah! I hope what happened to him won't happen to any of our party, specially our fair friends who are pirouetting away there so prettily. If you recollect the ice broke and Mr. Pickwick got a ducking. How's the ice, Boyd?" to the boy, who came spinning to the edge at the moment.

"First class, colonel, couldn't be in better form, it's as hard as nails and as slippery as — as old boots," said Mr. Boyd, after hesitating an instant for an appropriate simile.

"Ah! but just keep up at this end, will you?" said Mr. Biscoe, looking up, his face purple with the exertion of pulling at a refractory strap. "I was past here yesterday morning and saw that at the other end the men had broken up the ice for the deer or the waterfowl, and consequently what's there is only last night's frost, binding together the floating bits of yesterday, and likely to be very rotten!"

"Better have a board with 'Dangerous' or somethin' of that sort written on it and stuck up, hadn't we?" suggested Lord Hetherington, with Serpentine reminiscences.

"Scarcely time to get one prepared, my lord!" replied Mr. Biscoe, with a slight

smile. "Here, two of you men take a rope and lay it across the ice just below that alder tree. That'll warn 'em, and you, Boyd, tell 'em all to keep above that line. No good having any bother if one can prevent it." And Mr. Biscoe hobbled down the bank and shot away across the lake, returning in an instant, and showing that if his skates were old-fashioned, he could keep pace with any of the young ones notwithstanding.

"Nice exercise — very!" said the colonel, who was getting so cold that he was almost prepared to risk the chance of a tumble and "have a pair on." "I do like to see a woman skating; there's something in it that's — Ah!" And the old colonel kissed the tips of his fingers, partly to warm them, partly to express his admiration. "Now, who is that in the brown velvet trimmed with fur? She seems to know all about it."

"That's my sister Caroline," said his lordship, looking through his double glass. "Yes, she skates capitally, don't she? Pretty dress, too; looks like those people in the pictures outside the polkas, don't it? Who's — Oh, Mr. Joyce! How d'ye do, Mr. Joyce? My secretary; very decent young man that."

The colonel merely coughed behind his buckskin glove. He did not think much of secretaries, and shared Jack Cade's opinion in regard to the professors of the arts of reading and writing. Just then Lady Caroline approached the bank.

"Colonel, are you inclined to back the service in general, and your own regiment in particular? Mr. Patey and I are going to have a race. Of course he gives me a long start. Will you bet?"

"Too delighted to have the chance of losing," said the colonel, with old-fashioned gallantry. "And I'll give odds, too — a dozen pairs to half a dozen. Patey, sustain the credit of the corps in every particular."

"Depend on me, colonel," said Mr. Patey, a long-limbed lieutenant of untiring wind. "Mr. Boyd, take Lady Caroline to her place, and then start us."

Walter Joyce had heard none of this colloquy. He had joined Mr. Biscoe, with whom he had formed a great friendship, and was showing him how to shift from the outer edge of an "eight" and shoot off into a "spread eagle," an intricate movement requiring all your attention, when he heard a sharp crack, followed by a loud shout. Without a word they dashed off to the other end of the lake where the crowd was

greatest. Joyce arrived first. What he saw was a large pool of water where ice had been; floating on it a small round velvet cap trimmed with fur. He looked hastily round. She was not there—then he knew what had occurred.

At that instant his arm was seized by Mr. Biscoe, who whispered, "Wait man! They're fetching the rope!" "Stand back!" he cried, "it'd be too late! Let me go!" and the next instant he was diving beneath the floating fragments of ice.

"It was as near as a toucher," Mr. Boyd said, and he was right. When they pulled him in, Joyce's arm, which had been wound round Lady Caroline, had nearly given way, and the hand with which he had clung to the ice-edge was bruised and bleeding. Just as they were lifted on shore he thought he saw her lips move. He bent his head, and heard one word—"Walter!" Then he fainted.

A QUESTION OF ANCESTRY.

THE French assure us that "*rien n'est sacré pour un sappeur*." But neither the sapper, nor the French, have any monopoly of irreverence and incredulity in our day. People question everything, past and present. The wisdom and veracity of our ancestors are laughed to scorn, and historians and annalists of all degrees of note and authority are put into the witness-box, and rigidly cross-examined. Niebuhr with Rome, and Cornwall Lewis with Greece, remind one of bulls in a china shop, butting and smashing with might and main among the brittle but beautiful wares of antiquity. There was no Romulus and no Remus, and consequently those interesting babes were never suckled by a wolf. Virgil and the Roman poets are yet mercifully left us; they were but moderns after all, but Homer, in racing phrase, "is nowhere." His existence is denied, and if that by any chance be granted, his authorship of the *Iliad* is impugned by the literary sappers, who disintegrate the immortal work into a series of separate ballads, written or composed by various "eminent hands," whose names no one knows or can possibly discover. We are not even allowed to imagine that Macbeth killed Duncan as Shakespeare tells us, but we are informed and commanded to believe, that these two rivals for the crown of Scotland fought out their quarrel fairly in the battle-field; that Duncan was slain in single combat, and that Macbeth was no murderer at all. We are also told by the sappers that Richard the Third had not a hunchback, but was a very handsome man, with only a slight and studious stoop in his shoulders; that, moreover, he was a very good king, beloved by the people,

and only hated by the nobility, who employed and paid partial historians to blacken his character and misinterpret the events of his reign. We hear also that Henry the Eighth was a soft, kind-hearted gentleman, the victim of designing women, whom he loved but too well, and too foolishly; that his daughter Mary no more deserved to be called "bloody," than his daughter Elizabeth; with various other contradictions of our pre-instilled knowledge or beliefs, sufficient to justify the wary old Sir Robert Walpole in proclaiming all history to be, as in plain Saxon English he called it, "a lie." Saxon! did I say? Yes, I did, but who and what are the Saxons? A very determined sapper, one Thomas Nicholas, Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy, following in the wake of other incredulous philosophers, denies that the English are Saxons, or Anglo-Saxons, and proclaims us to be a nation, in which the Celtic or Keltic blood is more largely predominant than any other, and this more especially in the midland counties, where Shakespeare was born. Here is a sapper with a vengeance! The facts and arguments on which this ethnological iconoclast bases his astounding statement, are to be found in a volume recently published, entitled, "*The Pedigree of the English People investigated; an Argument Historical and Scientific on English Ethnology, showing the Progress of Race-amalgamation in Britain from the Earliest Times, with especial Reference to the incorporation of the Celtic Aborigines*." Dr. Nicholas, like other sappers, has a good deal to say for himself, and merits respectful attention both for the array and marshalment of his facts, and for the arguments which he builds upon them. Let us hear, and then judge his exposition, that we may either continue to call ourselves Anglo-Saxons, as we have been in the habit of doing for more than a thousand years, or Celto-Saxons, if that be the truer and more accurate definition.

Every one knows now-a-days that the Ancient Britons or Celts of this island were not exactly savages, as it was once the fashion to consider them; inasmuch as they were cunning artificers in gold, iron, and brass, kept cattle, built houses, and cultivated the soil. Diodorus Siculus says, "that the Britons used chariots, as the ancient Greek heroes are reported to have done in the Trojan war; that they were simple in their manners, and far removed from the crimes and wickedness of the men of the present day; that the island was *thickly inhabited*; and that the people of Cornwall were particularly fond of strangers, and civilised in their manners." Cæsar himself, who never penetrated very far into the interior, is forced to admit, evidently much against his inclination, that the Britons of Kent "were not barbarians; that the land was well peopled, and full of houses built after the manner of the Gauls; that the people used brass and gold money, and employed iron rings of a certain weight in barter." He also confessed that the heavy armed legions of Rome were no match

for the British charioteers. The Romans undoubtedly conquered the country—finding the conquest not at all an easy one—and held it, with varying fortune, for four hundred and sixty-five years. During all this time they made no attempt to exterminate or seriously oppress the people, as the Americans have done with the Red Indians within the last three centuries, there being no antipathy of race between the conquerors and the conquered, such as is found between white men and negroes, and the aborigines of America, Australia, and New Zealand.

On the departure of the Romans, the Britons were not only a numerous, but a highly civilised people—as civilisation was considered in that age—and powerful enough, if they could only have managed to agree among themselves, to assert and maintain their independence. But they did not agree; and the result was that they fell a prey to the Saxon invaders, whom one of their princes foolishly invited to take part in their internal commotions. All this is well known. But here a question arises to which the answer is not so clear. Did the Saxons, and after them the Danes, gain such a mastery over the aboriginal Britons as to exterminate the greater portion of them, and drive the small remainder into the mountain fastnesses of Wales, to the remote extremities of Cornwall, and across the Forth to the other side of the then formidable Grampians, that not even the Romans had ventured to cross in their career of conquest? The answer to this question has hitherto been in the affirmative. The ancient historians, and after them the modern school histories, have agreed in accepting this view of the case, and while admitting the English to be a mixed race—more mixed perhaps than any other European people—they have uniformly insisted that at the time of the conquest of England by the Normans, the English people were Anglo-Saxons, with a slight admixture of Danes and other Scandinavians, and that the Cymri, and Celts, were nowhere to be found within the limits of the now United Kingdom, except in Cornwall, Wales, the Isle of Man, Ireland, and the Highlands of Scotland. Dr. Nicholas asserts that this historical statement is untrue, and not only untrue but incredible, that the great majority of the English people at the time of the Conquest were Celts; that the Norman invaders were themselves Celts—recruited to a great extent in Armorica, now called Brittany—and that this invasion, as far as numbers went, was a consequent augmentation of the Celtic element in what is now the great and conquering British race; a race that happily, at an early period of its history, adopted the Saxon, or Anglo-Saxon language, in all parts of the island where the Celts did not keep wholly aloof from the invaders, as in Wales, the Isle of Man, and the mountains of Scotland.

The first and only original authority for the commonly received statement, which Dr. Nicholas undertakes to refute, is Gildas. Who was Gildas? He was a monk, born in England in or about the year 514. His name or designation implies that he was a Celt, and is derived

apparently from gille or gil, a child, and daorsa, captivity or bondage. He went to Armorica, or Brittany, in 550, and at some time during the ten subsequent years wrote his book called *De Excidio Britannię*, in which he told the melancholy story of the degeneracy, conquest, flight, and extermination of the Ancient Britons. He declares that the Britons, reduced to a "wretched remnant," sent their "groans" to the Roman Consul Aëtius, imploring his aid against the Scots and Picts (who, it should be remembered, were Celts as well as they), stating "that the barbarians drove them to the sea, and that the sea drove them back to the barbarians; that these two modes of death awaited them; that they were either slain or drowned." He adds, "that the Romans, affording them no aid, their councillors agreed with that proud tyrant Furthrigern (Vortigern) to invite the fierce and impious Saxons—a race hateful to God and man. Nothing was ever so pernicious to our country. . . . A multitude of whelps came forth from the lair of the barbaric lioness. They first landed on the east shore of the island, and there fixed their sharp talons. . . . Some of the miserable remnant (of the Britons), being taken in the mountains, were murdered in great numbers; others, constrained by famine, came and yielded themselves to be slaves for ever to their foes; others passed beyond the seas with loud lamentations." This very melancholy story was copied from Gildas a century afterwards, by the venerable Bede, and three centuries afterwards by Nennius, and thence found its way, unquestioned, into the ordinary histories of England. Dr. Nicholas expresses the greatest contempt for Gildas as an authority—asserts that there were three or four persons of the name, and that he cannot distinguish which was which; but allowing, for the sake of argument, that he was an authentic person, and the author of the *Excidium*, he asks how far he is to be considered an adequate authority for the statements he makes? By no means mistrusting his own judgment in the matter, he nevertheless, like a prudent man, supports his conclusions by those of other writers, and notably by those of Gibbon, and of Mr. Thomas Duffus Hardy, the highest living authority on the subject of early English history. Gibbon, speaking of Gildas, describes him as a monk, who, in profound ignorance of human life, had presumed to exercise the office of historian, and had strangely disfigured the state of Britain at the time of its separation from the Roman Empire. Mr. Hardy proclaims the narrative of Gildas to be "meagre," and "involved in a multitude of words;" says that he has but an "indistinct acquaintance" with the events he describes; that he is confused and declamatory; that his statements, except in very few instances, cannot be traced to any known source; and that when he comes to his own time he is, if possible, more obscure than when he discusses bygone ages. As regards his authorities, Gildas himself confesses "that he wrote more from foreign relations, than from written evidences pertaining to his own country."

Having thus demolished, or at all events greatly impaired, the authority of Gildas, the next step of Dr. Nicholas is to ascertain, whether his extraordinary statement as to the all but total extermination of his countrymen gains any corroboration from subsequent facts with which he, and the men of his day were unacquainted. If the Ancient Britons over the greater part of England were exterminated in the sixth century, how could they be numerous in any part of England in the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries? It is, in answer to this question, that the Philoceltism of Dr. Nicholas becomes apparent. He denies the extermination, and proves that, although the Celtic language disappeared, in consequence of the gradual adoption by the British masses of the superior Saxon or Anglo-Saxon tongue, the Celts themselves remained. In the time of Athelstan, the Saxon king, five hundred years after the arrival of Hengist and Horsa (if these were the names of real people, and did not signify horse and mare, from the devices on the banners of the invaders), communities of Cymry (Celts) speaking Celtic, and observing their own usages, were in existence in the very heart of the kingdom of Wessex. In the reign of Egbert, four hundred years after the days of Hengist and Horsa, it appears from the "will of King Alfred," published in Oxford in 1788, that the counties of Dorset, Devon, Wilts, and Somerset, were all considered as belonging to the *Weal-cynne* (Welkin), the dominion or kingdom of the Welsh, or Ancient Britons. "Throughout the country, even in the central parts," says Dr. Nicholas, "such as Bedford, Banbury, Potterton, Bath, we find so late as between the years 552 and 658, mighty battles fought by the Britons proper of those districts, who rose to avenge the oppressive exactions of their conquerors, as is proved by the Saxon Chronicle under those dates. During all this time," he adds, "West Wales, or Cornwall and Devon, great part of Somerset, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Westmoreland, Cumberland, and the south of Scotland, as well as the whole of Wales, the *patria intacta* of the Cymry, were in the possession of those Britons who had hitherto kept themselves unmixed with the Teutons." Regarding the manner in which the Britons were disposed of—a hundred and twenty-five years after Gildas wrote of their extermination—a curious instance is recorded in Camden's *Britannica*, and quoted by Dr. Nicholas. In the year 635, "Egfrid, King of Northumbria, makes a grant of the district of Cartmel with the Britons thereupon, to the see of Lindisfarne." Cartmel is in Furness, Lancashire; and it appears, as Dr. Nicholas states, "that when an Anglo-Saxon king obtained the power of absolute disposal of the native inhabitants of a whole district, he exercised the power not by their extermination, not by their consignment to bondage, but by bestowing them as a holy gift to the Church, thus handing them over to the best protection then existing." In

short, the researches of modern authors are sufficient to prove, that the Britons made a gallant fight against both the Saxons and the Danes; that their conquest was not easy; that neither the Saxons nor the Danes ever sought to exterminate, but only to subdue them; and that as time wore on, and Saxon rule became more firmly established, the two races blended together, and the Celts became so Saxonified and the Saxons so Celtified by constant intermarriage, that Danes, Saxons, and Celts gradually fused into one people, called the English. The last conquest of England added to, and did not diminish, the Celtic element, inasmuch as the Normans, who came over with William, were of Celtic origin. This fusion of race was fortunate alike for Celts and Saxons, and produced not only a noble people, but a noble language. The Celts are martial, quick-witted, imaginative, musical, generous, and rash, but lack continuity of purpose, and sustained energy; while the Saxons are solid, plodding, industrious, prudent, slow to anger, sure to complete what they once take earnestly in hand, while they are deficient in wit, fancy, and imagination. The Celtic poetry of Shakespeare, Scott, and Burns, are combined in the English character with the Saxon energy, and sound sense of such men as Watt, Stephenson, Cobden, and Palmerston; while the language that has sprung from the two, promises to be the language of the world.

One of the arguments which Dr. Nicholas uses in support of his proposition, and which he might have extended with great advantage, had he been as well acquainted with the Irish and Scottish varieties of the Celtic language as he appears to be with the Cymric, is that the names of nearly all the ancient towns and cities, and all the rivers in Great Britain, are Celtic. In point of fact, the names of all the great rivers and mountain ranges of Europe are Celtic, which, however, proves nothing more than the antiquity of the Celtic race, and goes little towards making out the non-extermination of the British Celts in the sixth century by the Saxons or Angles. A better argument in support of the proposition that the Celts and Cymri were not exterminated, but were gradually amalgamated with their successive military conquerors, is to be found in the very considerable admixture of Celtic words, both Welsh and Gaelic, in the English language, especially in those words that are to a greater extent colloquial and popular than literary, and in the great variety of Celtic surnames borne by the English people as distinguished from those Scotch, Welsh, and Irish surnames, whose Celtic origin is better known.

The compilers of our best English dictionaries, from the days of Samuel Johnson to our own, have greatly neglected the Celtic etymology of the language, and have been content to trace the roots of words either to the Anglo-Saxon, the Danish, the Latin, the Greek, and the French, without troubling themselves to ascertain the origin of words of which these were not the sources. The words "boy" and "girl," which are, both Celtic, may serve as instances of this

ignorance on the part of lexicographers. Johnson derives "boy" from the German or Saxon "bube," but admits that the etymology is uncertain. No such word as boy occurs in Bosworth's Anglo-Saxon dictionary, but it is to be found in the Manx language, a branch of the Celtic, with the orthography of bwoie. "Girl" is a word that has puzzled the dictionary makers quite as much as its companion, boy, and they all seek its etymology everywhere except in the right place. One exceedingly wise person (in his own estimation), named Minshew, traces it from the Latin garrula, because girls are garrulous and fond of prating; and not being quite sure that he is right, suggests that possibly it may be from the Italian girella, a weathercock, "because of their fickleness." The "r" in the word, which is not usually pronounced, seems to have led this learned noodle astray. The vulgar pronunciation, "gal," points to its true source in the Celtic caile and cailinn, pronounced kala and kalinn, and to the Irish coleen. Another possible derivation, which it would be pleasant and flattering to the sex to believe to be the correct one, is from the Gaelic gaol, pronounced "gurl," without the "r," and signifying love. The Anglo-Saxon words for "girl" were piga and maid, the latter of which remains. Piga has been very properly superseded, and only remains in the once common public-house sign of "Pig and Whistle," perverted from "piga and wassail"—i. e., a lass and a glass. The word "grove" is another word of which the grammarians, ignorant of the original language of the British people, can make nothing. Worcester, whose dictionary is one of the best ever compiled, and who does not wholly ignore the Celtic and Cymric elements of the language, derives grove from the Anglo-Saxon graef, a grave or ditch, and quotes from Junius the explanation that "groves are frequently protected by a ditch thrown around them." "More probably," adds Richardson, "because a grove is cut out, hollowed out of a thicket of trees: it is not the thicket itself." But the word existed in England for centuries before a Saxon set foot on the soil, and is no other than the Celtic craobh, pronounced kraov, a tree, and craobhach or kraovag, abounding in trees. The words "cuddle" and "fun," which the dictionaries call low words, and scarcely attempt to define, because they find no traces of them in Anglo-Saxon, Greek, Latin, or French, are pure Celtic. Cuddle is from cadail, to sleep; and fun is from fonn, music;—following the same tone of thought which converted the Anglo-Saxon "glee," which originally meant music, into a synonym for the mirth and pleasure which music produces. The slang word cove, a man or fellow, comes from the Gaelic caomh, pronounced kaov, gentle, courteous. "Dull" and "tall" are Celtic words, of which the origin was unsuspected and unknown at the time when our first dictionaries were published, and mean respectively "blind" and "high," which are their Anglo-Saxon synonyms.

Many hundreds of such words might be cited, but enough, perhaps, has been said, to prove that the language has still a large percentage of the original dialect of the Britons. The patronymics of the English are Celtic to a degree of which Mr. Mark Anthony Lower—the only person who has devoted much time to the subject, and who has compiled a large volume about it—is utterly unconscious. Omitting altogether the Welsh, the Irish, and the Scottish names—the Ap's, the O's, and the Mac's—a very large list of Celtic names in use among the English might be compiled. Among others, all the names that terminate in ton, don, or ley are of Celtic or British origin, or sometimes a compound of Saxon and Celtic. Ton and don are the modern forms of "dun" or town, a Celtic word that in Saxon or Anglo-Saxon would be represented by berg, burgh, and burg. Milton—compounded of a Saxon and a Celtic word—signifies mill, or windmill-hill, or the mill on the downs, or down. Ley or lle is the Celtic for place, whence Stanley, a hybrid word, half Saxon, half Celtic, signifying the stony place. Among other Celtic patronymics cited at random are Capel, from capul, a brood mare; Doran, an otter; Braddon, a salmon; Lack and Lake, from lach, a wild duck; Phillimore, from the Gaelic fille, a garment, or plait, and mor, great; Ross, Roos, and Rouse, from ruis, the alder-tree; Cowan and Cohen, from cuan, the ocean; Muir and Moir, from muir, the sea; More and Moore, from mor, great; Frith a forest; Glen, glenn, and Glyn, a valley; Ennis, Innis, and Inch, an island; Aird, a high place; Belmore, from baile-mor, the great town; Bligh, milk; Burt, sport, mockery; Cagger, a secret; Campkin, from cam, crooked, and cean, head; Camac, from camag, a curl; Cade, from cead, permission; Carr and Kerr, from cearr, wrong, awkward; Dallas, from dall, blind; Dana, from dana, poetical; Dorsay, from daorsa, captivity; Eyre, from eyrie, a high place; Outram, from outram, light, giddy; Morley, from ley, a place, and mor, great; Bain, Bean, and Behan, from bean, white; Campbell, from cam, crooked, and bille, mouth; Egan, from eigim, violence; Turley, from tur, a fortress or town, and ley, a place; Cadell, from cadail, sleep; Mearns, from muirne, the vine; Malthus—slow and silent—from mall, slow, and thos, silent; and our very old and familiar friend Smith, from simid or simit, a hammer. This list might be largely extended, and the subject is well worth the study of one who aspires to give us a book that does not yet exist—the true etymology and origin of the patronymics of Great Britain.

Were I a judge on the bench, deciding on the veracity of Gildas, on which alone rests the story of the extermination of the British, I should pronounce him guilty either of wilful error, or fabrication, or of stupidity. Were he and his reliability not in question, but only the point whether the English are more of an Anglo-Saxon than of a Celtic nation, I think I should decide upon the evidence of local his-

tory, tradition, and philosophy, that our language was far more Anglo-Saxon than our blood. At all events—if I were not sure—I would admit, like Sir Roger de Coverley, "that there was much to be said on both sides."

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. TAVISTOCK TO PLYMOUTH.

THE crow now leaves the moor, and sweeping over the vale of the Tavy alights on the nearest roof of Tavistock, that thriving town among the hills, and sees Dartmoor Tors grey in the distance. On the ruins of the abbey the crow rests to gather traditions of the old abbots—good, bad, and indifferent. The abbey was dedicated to St. Rumon, a forgotten Cornish bishop, whose anatomical relics were brought here by the founder, Ordgar, a Saxon alderman, who held all Devonshire, and every town or city between Frome and Exeter. He was father of Elfrida, the wife of King Edgar. Ordgar's son, Ordulph, completed and endowed this abbey. Ethelred confirmed its privileges; so by degrees the chancel walls grew, and the nave roof spread, and the tower rose, and the great windows bloomed into colour, and the organ's music vibrated through the aisles, the incense fumed, the boys' voices rose to heaven, and the piety of those ages perpetuated itself in that great casket of stone. Then faith grew chill, and wealth corrupted the heart of the chief religious house in the two western counties, and it became the abode of dissolute and revelling monks, fat, cyder-swilling creatures, shunned by the honest people and dreaded by the virtuous. Abbot Livingus, the friend of Canute, who rebuilt the abbey that Sweyn and his Danes had burnt, would have shuddered at such inmates; the learned and pious Aldred, who offered the golden chalice at the Holy Sepulchre, who brought home the sacred palm branch from the Jordan, and who afterwards consecrated both Harold and his slayer, the Conqueror, would have spurned such sons of Belial from the shrine of St. Rumon.

As day by day the old faith grew colder, the pictures and emblems, once so useful as appeals to the senses of unlettered worshippers, degenerated into mere inducements to idolatry. The Tavistock abbots grew rich, proud, and dissolute; discipline grew slack in the convents. Abbot John de Courtenay loved hunting better than preaching, and the monks ran riot; Abbot Cullyng, also deposed by the Bishop of Exeter, connived at private feasts of the monks, and permitted them to appear in Tavistock as gallants of the period, in buttoned tunics and long beaked Polish boots. The vengeance of Heaven found at last the fitting hand. Cromwell, Earl of Essex, destroyed part of the abbey. Henry the Eighth confiscated the other, and bestowed it on Lord John Russell, his favourite, to whose descendant it still belongs. It was worth nine hundred pounds a year then. Since then it has been parted among

various devastators. The Bedford Hotel stands on the site of the chapter house, the refectory is a Unitarian chapel, the north gateway is a public library. The still house adorns the vicarage grounds. The abbey, bad as were its inmates, deserved a better fate, if it were only for the fact that the second printing press in England was set up in its precincts.

Just outside the town, on the new Plymouth road, the crow alights on the old gateway of Fitzford—an old Cavalier mansion, of which this entrance alone remains. It was one of this family from whom the well near Princes Town, on Dartmoor, is named—Sir Richard Grenville, one of King Charles's generals, who married the Lady Howard, the heiress of Fitzford, and inherited the property. This lady, the legend says, had previously removed three husbands, and tradition holds her as specially accursed, and still punished for her crimes in the place where they were committed. Transformed to a hound, she is condemned nightly to run from the old gateway of Fitzford House to the park at Okehampton between midnight and cockerow, and to return to Tavistock with a single blade of grass in her mouth. She will be released when in this slow way all the grass in the park has been picked.

In 1645, Tavistock was visited by Prince Charles, while Plymouth was being invested by his father's army, and the gay lad is said to have always remembered, with horror, the continued wet weather at the town by the banks of the Tavy; still it is nothing to Dartmoor, where the Atlantic vapours are perpetually condensing on the cold tors, and the local rhyme is,

The west wind always brings wet weather,
The east wind wet and cold together,
The south wind surely brings us rain,
The north wind blows it back again.

The crow searching through Tavistock, soon finds St. Eustace Tower, a spot upon which it is worth alighting; because in this church are preserved gigantic bones said to be those of Ordulph, the son of that Alderman Ordgar who founded Tavistock Abbey. Great stories (in every sense) are told of the Saxon champion. When he came to Exeter with King Edward the Confessor, he is said to have grown enraged at the absence of the porter who should have opened the city gates. Leaping off his horse he wrenched the bars out with his hands, and dragged down parts of the city wall. Then driving in the hinges of the gate with his strenuous feet, he burst in the opposing door. Ordulph is said to have been in the habit of bestriding a river ten feet broad that ran near the house, and chopping off with his knife the heads of deer and oxen, with as much sang-froid as gardeners lop celery.

Tavistock is specially proud of her greatest son, Drake, "the old warrior," as Devonshire country people quaintly call him, who was born at Crowndale, one mile to the south-west, at a house long since removed from the crow's sight. His favourite residence was Buckland Abbey

on the Tavy, four miles from the town. They still preserve there his portrait by Jansen, his sword, his ship drum, and the Bible, which he carried with him round the world. The house was built by Sir Francis on the pleasant site of an old Cistercian abbey, given him by Queen Elizabeth. The barn and belfry still remain, and four arches of the central tower are built into the garrets. In the abbey orchard hard by he paced, musing of Darien and the Pacific, of Spanish galleons and pieces of eight. Let the crow for a moment be biographical. This terror of the Spaniards was the son of a poor yeoman on the banks of the Tavy. In the days of persecution his father fled into Kent, and in Elizabeth's reign took orders and became vicar of Upnor church, where the royal fleet then usually anchored. Francis became a sailor in a small coaster, and his master eventually leaving him his bark and equipment, he grew a thriving man. Suddenly fired by the exploits of Hawkins against the Spaniards "in the Golden South Amerikies" Drake started for Plymouth, sold his ship, and joined Hawkins's last expedition to the Spanish Main. Losing all in this adventure, Drake swore revenge on Spain, and sailed off with three fishing boats and seventy-three men and boys to plunder Spanish towns, burn Spanish ships, and seize Spanish wealth any where, whether on sea or land. He returned to Plymouth on a Sunday, his frail vessels brimming with gold, and all the townspeople came running from church to welcome the hero.

In his next venture, with only five small vessels and one hundred and sixty-four men, Drake circumnavigated the world, and returned home after an eventful voyage of two years and nearly ten months, having taken a plate ship, and plundered half the sea-port towns of Chili and Peru. From that time forth Drake was a thorn in the side of Spain. Half patriot, half buccaneer, he ravaged the coast of Spain, destroyed four castles and one hundred vessels, and, in fact, "sing'd the King of Spain's beard" all over. He invaded Portugal; he discovered the secret of the Spanish trade with India; he helped to shatter the Armada. Spanish admirals died of broken hearts at the success of Drake. Then came the miserable expedition to the West Indies, when the leaders quarrelled and everything went wrong. Baskerville failed to cross the Isthmus of Darien, and burn Panama; Hawkins died of vexation; fever broke out at Nombre de Dios; and Drake at last died, partly of disease and partly of a broken heart. The sailors lowered him to his grave in the sea off Porto Bello:

The waves became his winding sheet, the waters were his tomb,
But for his fame, the ocean sea was not sufficient room.

For a smaller mercy Tavistock is also grateful, namely, for being the birthplace of William Browne, a humble contemporary of Spenser and Shakespeare, and author of *Britannia's Pastorals*, a poem highly eulogised

by Lambe, Hazlitt, and others of that school. Browne was a tutor to the Earl of Camarvon, who was slain at the battle of Newbury, acquired a competency under the patronage of the Earl of Pembroke, purchased an estate, and wrote pastoral verses, without vigour, but never wanting in elegance. Selden, Drayton, Wither, and Ben Jonson admired him, but he soon passed out of mind. His *Inner Temple Masque*, produced at court, was not printed till a hundred and twenty years after his death, and all his poems but this would probably have perished, but for a single copy of them preserved by Warton. Milton is supposed to have imitated him, and carried him further in *L'Allegro* and *Lycidas*. In his prettiest episode, *The Love of the Walla and the Tavy*, he sings the praises of a brook that runs past Kilworthy and the home of the Glanvilles. One of the choicest passages of the Tavistock poet is his description of a rose:

Look, as a sweet rose fairly budding forth
Betrays her beauties to the enamoured morn,
Until some keen blast from the envious north
Kills the sweet bud that was but newly born.
Or else her rarest smells delighting
Make herself betray,
Some white and curious hand inviting
To pluck her thence away.

The Glanvilles were of Tavistock. They were lawyers by right of race. The son of a judge of the Common Pleas, Sir John was speaker and king's serjeant before the civil war. The Puritans took away his seat in parliament, and sent him to prison, to note cases and judgments behind the bars of the Tower. At the Restoration he was again safe for high rank, when death suddenly stepped in and called him out of court. He was made serjeant in company with Dew and Harris, two other Devonshire lawyers, and Fuller describes the three as thus spoken of:

One {gained } as much as the other two.
One {spent }
One {gave }

Lastly, Tavistock boasts justly of Mrs. Bray (who has made the bowers of the Tamar and Tavy the scenes of her pleasant stories), Ford of Fitzford, Henry de Pomeroy, and Trelawny of Trelawne.

Near Kilworthy, the seat of the Glanvilles, the crow alights in one of the trees of Rowdon wood, remembering that a strange and exceptional whirlwind visited this place in 1768. A stream of storm swept through the wood, cutting a passage of about forty yards in width, tearing up huge oaks by the roots, as if they had been radishes, and carrying their branches off, like drift on a torrent; it then rolled up the valley of the Tavy, and exhausted its rage in the barren wilderness of Dartmoor. Its coming and its going were alike mysterious.

On its way to Plymouth, the crow descends, near Lamerton, on the chimney of Collacombe Barton, the old seat of the Tremaynes, built by Sir Thomas Wise, in the reign of King James. It was garrisoned for King Charles, and taken by the parliament men. Fuller describes two

brothers of this family, who were twins. Nicholas and Andrew could only be distinguished by the colour of their doublets and the plumes in their hats. They felt like pain even when apart, and loved to walk, travel, sit, sleep, eat, and drink together, till Providence, sympathising with their friendship, eventually permitted them both to be slain in the same skirmish at Newhaven, in France.

Once more on his flight to Plymouth the crow slackens over Lamerton, because there the father of Rowe, the poet, was rector. Rowe was a vain, handsome man who became under-secretary of state to Queen Anne, and whose vivacity and gaiety rendered him very agreeable to Pope. His Jane Shore was approved by Johnson; his Lady Jane Grey by no one. Mrs. Oldfield, the great actress, pronounced Rowe the best elocutionist she had ever heard. He is said to have been fond of flourishing, at the Cocoa Tree in St. James's-street, a snuff-box set with diamonds that some foreign prince had given him.

And now, leaving the region of the tors, the crow strikes out for Plymouth Sound, where the giant Breakwater spreads its defiant arms like those of a strong swimmer against the waves, and the Eddystone on the distant rock raises its votive beacon.

THE PLANTING OF THE VINE.

A THOUGHT FROM THE GERMAN.

I.

OLD Father Noah sat alone
Within his tent at morn,
With such a shadow on his face
As spoke a heart forlorn.
"What ails thee, Noah?" said a voice,
Like soft, sweet music pour'd;
And Noah, looking up, beheld
The angel of the Lord.
"Forgive me, Lord!" he said and sigh'd,
"If wrongfully, I think,
But I am thirsty, nigh to death,
And know not what to drink!"

II.

"To drink?" the gracious angel said:
"See, where the streamlets run,
And all the gladsome waters leap,
Rejoicing to the sun."
"Tis true, dear Lord! but thought recalls
The mournful myriads drowned—
Brave men, fair women, lovely babes,
And cattle of the ground.
I loathe all water for their sakes—
The beautiful, the young—
It tastes of blood, it smells of death;
'Tis poison to my tongue!"

III.

The radiant angel's lovely face
Shone bright with heavenly fire:
"Noah, such pity for mankind
Beseems their second sire.
Wait till I come!" Like lightning flash
He vanished up the skies,
And like a lightning flash returned,
Ere Noah raised his eyes.
"Take this," he said, and held aloft
A vine-stock branching fair:
"Heaven's noblest gift to human kind,
Entrusted to thy care."

IV.

"Go, plant it on the sunny hills;
For health and length of days,
And press its fruit for joyous drink,
And the Creator's praise.
It bears no taint of pain or death,
And fails not to impart
Strength to the body and the mind,
And gladness to the heart.
But curse not water, e'en in thought,
God's blessing most benign,
Fountain of beauty and of life,
Mother of men and wine."

TO THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

THE REPORTS OF A VOLUNTEER COMMISSIONER.

SIX IN NUMBER.

REPORT THE FIRST.

THE present writer read, with much interest, your Lordship's circular, addressed to the managers of the London theatres, and has followed, with equal interest, though with some slight astonishment, the correspondence and remarks that have thereupon ensued. It has been pleasant to him to observe that on both sides of this question there is much, of various degrees of merit, to be said, and that, in especial, the opposite parties in the controversy, which was brought about by your Lordship's excellent (if somewhat timid) advice, assert the whiteness of black and the blackness of white with edifying affability. The manager of a prominent theatre, in recognition of the invitation given in the circular in question, advises your Lordship to take severe measures with the Music Halls, whence, according to the opinion of this gentleman (well entitled to be heard), the mischief originally comes. Certain Music Hall proprietors, on the other hand, write to the papers, accusing the Theatres of all that is improper, vaunting the spotless purity of their own establishments, and challenging contradiction. Similar differences of opinion exist amongst those members of the public at large, who have joined the fray. As between Music Halls and Theatres, the quarrel appears to be merely a revival of an old difficulty between the managers of rival classes of entertainments, and, as such, has little or no real interest for the public. But in the matter really touched upon in your Lordship's remarks, and from which the controversialists have somewhat wandered, the public is gravely interested.

It is said that the managers of Theatres have been, and are gradually more and more drifting into a habit of exhibiting on their stages, improprieties, vitiating to the public taste, and hurtful to the public morals.

It is suggested that the ladies who are engaged to play in the pantomimes and burlesques, to which it may be presumed your Lordship's remarks especially apply, seize with eagerness the opportunity of displaying too much of their charms to appreciative audiences. Contrariwise, it has been urged in more than one letter by the managers of Theatres, and by casual critics, that the fault is not with them, but with the public; that the public has ceased to be decorous itself, and calls aloud for a want of decorum in its entertainers; that managers give, in a word, the kind of entertainment, which has at last brought upon them the mild thunders of your Lordship's office, because that kind was imperatively demanded by their exacting supporters. This is a serious charge to bring against a public; but it is a still more serious matter when the accused assumes its truth and glibly runs off, as one of the slipshod topics of the day, with commonplaces about the indecencies of the stage. People who talk thus forget the important fact that the drama with a large class of spectators takes the place of books, and is a popular instructor for good or for evil, of vast importance—an engine of enormous power in forming the public tastes, which it is of the highest importance to keep in good working order—an institution which loses all its influence for good, if discredit be allowed to be cast upon it. The state of the theatre fairly reflects, although, occasionally, it may be conceded, in a somewhat distorted mirror, the state of the society of the day; at any rate, the tone of the stage is in a great degree derived from the tone of the audiences—each reacts upon the other; and, if mischief be done, it is difficult to apportion the blame among the parties concerned.

The first important question, however, would appear to be this: Is mischief being done? Have we been getting gradually worse and worse, until we have all imperceptibly assisted in the creation of a nuisance that now cries aloud for suppression?

Your Lordship yourself discreetly confines your remarks to "some of the metropolitan theatres," although the circular is sent to all; but the fact of the solemn warning being addressed to every manager, would make it appear that there must be several who have incurred your Lordship's displeasure. In certain evidence given before a committee of the House of Commons, your Lordship expressed yourself satisfied with the

powers vested in the office of Lord Chamberlain, considering them sufficient for all necessary purposes of supervision, and, in case of need, suppression. From this it would appear that the observations in the press and the remarks from other sources which instigated the circular of the 28th of January last, applied to so many theatres that your Lordship felt it impossible to exercise the authority vested in the Lord Chamberlain's office, and that the evil had attained too great a height to be cured by a coup-de-main, and that gradual measures were judged the most likely to be successful.

A constant playgoer from his youth up, the gravity of the charge thus made against managers, actors, and audiences, considerably startled the Commissioner who has the honour of making this report. He was concerned to think that he had assisted at entertainments, at which costumes were worn of an impropriety so marked, as to call for the interference of the State. He was horrified to think that he had permitted the ladies of his family to sanction by their presence exhibitions of questionable decency. Much disturbed in mind, thinking it possible that there might be special reason for complaint that had hitherto escaped his eyes, and anxious to see how matters really stood, he formed himself into a Volunteer Commission of one, and devoted himself to the study of the pantomimes and burlesques of the season. He also carefully studied the kind of entertainment presented at Music Halls. And with (or without) your Lordship's permission he has now the honour to lay his report at your feet.

Your Commissioner may respectfully point out to your Lordship that in the course of his remarks upon the numerous performances he has attended, there will be found observations on subjects not specially connected with the department of Lord Chamberlain, and not in any respect under your Lordship's authority. Your Commissioner, being a volunteer, and under his own command, has not thought it necessary to regulate his report by any strict rules of departmental discipline, and has no doubt that such cases will frequently occur in the present document.

In fact, the whole of the earlier portion of the report now presented, treats of matters foreign to your Lordship's department. That they may soon be brought under strong influence, and sharp discipline, is much to be desired.

REPORT THE SECOND.

THE ROYAL PANDEMONIUM PALACE.

THAT we are the most moral people on the face of the earth, was once almost the boast of the complacent Briton. Now, such a vaunting would be disclaimed as arrogance, and in something of this key: we have our faults, and failings, and vices; and in the metropolis, particularly, there is much to amend, scenes of rude vice, the squalor of wickedness, as it were, arising from the vastness and the complex organisation of the great city, which we call, with pardonable pride, the capital of the world. But in the English people, and the London people, there is a true moral sense, after all; and none of that coarse publicity, that flaunting of vice which so shocks us in Paris. We may justly thank Providence for having a police force, as well as a House of Lords, which, directed by a nice public opinion, takes care that vice shall pay the proverbial homage to virtue, or go at once to the Station. "No, sir," says Mr. Complacent Briton, "we may have a scandal now and again; but we have none of your brazen Paris morals over here. They must keep in the dark. Men are pretty much the same all the world over. I don't set up to be squeamish, but we won't have decency affronted here."

Some such remark Mr. Complacent Briton has often made to the observing foreigner, parting with him, perhaps, in the neighbourhood so congenial to aliens, or actually, perhaps, in sight of a mouldy square, towards the smaller hours; at one side of which rises a large illuminated lantern of Mobish pattern, all ablaze with windows, and stars, and devices, and through whose doors are pouring in and out streams of men and women. This flaming tabernacle, he will be told, is the ROYAL PANDEMONIUM PALACE; and, as an acute Frenchman, he will take its measure, as it were, in a second—for it speaks in a language that he perfectly understands—and with a smile of delight will enter to spend his night there.

It seems like a great vicious beehive, all seething within and without, with life and humanity. The blaze and the light in which the insects revel suffuse it through and through. Round the openings rises the eternal din of arriving broughams and hansom, their setting down and driving away. The far-off East-ender and shop boy, passing by, gazes with simplicity, and thinks this must be a very palace of delights, and is tempted in. Wiser men than he, who read their news-

papers conscientiously, may be tempted in too, perhaps, even into bringing their wives and daughters, for have they not read in broadsheets that no more admirably "conducted" place exists, and that we are under the deepest obligations to its "enterprising" proprietor.

Light in floods is always enticing—it is beauty, richness, colour, gold, silver, jewels; and there is plenty of it here. Were there another intelligent foreigner, with misgivings as to whether all this were not a sham, a mere pinchbeck imitation of his dear Paris, which would break down on examination, and discover the uncouth John Bull morality underneath; his mind would be set at rest by a short study of the successively arriving hansom, which stream up, each filled with what is termed "a lovely burden;" that is, with more ermine, and velvet, and bags of yellow hair, than would be quite agreeable to Mr. Complacent Briton. Each lovely burden descends briskly, pays her fare handsomely, and is gallantly helped out by a bearded, brawny officer of the establishment, dressed in gold lace, wearing earrings, who greets each with a natural familiarity, founded on an acquaintance of many thousand successive nights. The number of these burdens is something alarming. As it grows towards eleven, it becomes a perfect block; burden after burden is set down, and hurries in, fearful of losing a second, for the moments are golden. Up comes, too, the frequent brougham, dark and glistening—the lady from the opera—who drops the white-tied "votary of pleasure," and drives away. The votary of pleasure hurries in. Let us do the same.

Through the blaze at the entrance, we admire those noble soldiers, each about six feet two high, splendid men, privates in a corps, enrolled, no doubt, in defence of the order and morality of the house. They wear blue and gold tunics, with bright scarlet facings, scarlet and gold képis, and white belts, exquisitely pipelaid. The uniform size of these heroes is something amazing; their great chests and stalwart arms seem suitable for ox-felling, for which they are not required. In a well conducted establishment like this, Mr. Complacent Briton will be told, where all classes are mixed up in the pursuit of rational pleasure, it is quite necessary to have strong men on the spot, who can rally in a moment, and stamp out the beginning of disorder. In a well-conducted establishment

where a vast quantity of liquor is drunk, and where vast numbers of the class on whom liquor has a decided effect, attend, the strong men act promptly before the police can be troubled, and with a creditable roughness cast out anything like drunkenness, upon the streets, when of course it is some one else's business to deal with it. On any idiotic cries, or challenges to fight, the strong men rush up, seize the disturber by the throat, and hustle him out in a second. For the place must be well conducted.

What a scene inside!—vestibules blue, gold, and white, all champagne and glorified bars, and velvet sofas, and little pigeon-hole boxes, and painted Houris serving drinks. The crash of music comes from within; charming gentlemen are in crowds, all apparently devoted to lovely burdens, who seem to be never weary of accepting homage in the shape of what the Bar of England, behind which the Houris stand, can offer. Inside, what a spectacle!—loftiness, decoration, majesty, size, and a dim dome-like spaciousness not to be surpassed. Even the Frenchman owns that his dear Paris cannot boast its equal. Think of the noble stage, with its enormous opening, the grand orchestra in front, nearly a hundred strong, crashing out; then gallery after gallery ascending, as it were, to be lost in the cathedral-like roof, lost in the mists of too much light! But one may think more of the enormous crowd with which that vast tabernacle is bursting, with which it is boiling over—not the "sea of heads," still and steady, which is known to theatres, but an ever-circulating mass, floating to and fro, indistinct, undistinguished to a great degree. There is lovely burden after lovely burden, itself to another great degree glittering with the jewels and gold of the quality to which the burden itself is partial. They seem happy and in the highest spirits, and well may bless the kindly patronage which affords them this magnificent shelter and gaily encourages their presence; but at the same time regulates them with a firm hand, the hand of the strong men. For this is "a well-conducted place of amusement," and every young gentleman who is making his manners, or marring his head, comes to the Royal Pandemonium.

Down in the great area, what eating and drinking, what glittering silver tankards—or seeming silver—what Bass, what Allsopp, what innumerable "sodas"! Animated and crowded as that huge space appears, it is in truth the duller part

of the house; for here are herded the stupid homely souls who come merely to look at the magnificent entertainments provided on the stage, and for whom, I suspect, the proprietor has a befitting contempt. Even the strong men in their scarlet and blue uniform—handsome Life Guardsmen they look too—we can see despise these clodhoppers, who know nothing of life, and who do not come to see life. They do not order champagne wine for themselves, or for lovely burdens. They do not command costly suppers; they pay their shilling or so at the doors. Yet they are scrupulously treated; not for the world would the least disrespect be offered to them, or to the humdrum wives and daughters whom they bring with them to stare at the show. Nothing can be more generous than this treatment, for no sort of account can be found in it; to carpers like the present writer, the proprietor of this well-conducted place of amusement can retort, "Look down there at my patrons—the pure wives and daughters of England. *They* come to me. What are these idle charges?"

Well may they stare at the noble scenery that seems to run riot in fancy and colouring, at the endless troops of dancing seraphs, who seem to live, quite naturally, above in golden branches, to float in the air, and hang from clouds in the most natural way. So with the orchestra, its general leading them facing the audience. As we survey this motley crowd, all engaged in what is called harmless pleasure, it is impossible not to consider it a *school* of some sort, open every night in the year, and which is teaching all the young gentlemen and ladies who resort there lessons of some description.

The scholars, if we consider the hour during which the academy is open, resort there in thousands, some nearly every night, and for some their studies have quite a fascination. Some arrive from the opera in full dress—with opera hat, white tie. Every one newly come from the country repairs there at once, eager to see a little scholastic life. But it offers far more advantages to the mere youth—clerk or shopboy—who has here a career not to be pursued under other circumstances, so advantageously. In this splendid realm he gains an importance, a spurious man-about-township, at a cheap cost. He can ruffle it like a real gallant, according to his degree. Here he can generously "stand" refreshment, and purchase the converse and the smiles of lovely burdens; from here he

can return, boasting, to any less fortunate brethren of the counter, of his acquaintances. So with the young soldier from Aldershot, so with the "city man," the "gent," the "swell," and the curious species known as the "Champagne Charlie." There are various ways of showing oneself "a real gentleman;" but here we can see there is one true touchstone, that is, remunerating everybody magnificently. To have the good word or the recognition of the strong men in uniform and of the glorious army of red waiters—they serve us in flame-coloured jackets—is indeed most precious. I see high-spirited young fellows, of "the true breed," giving their five shilling pieces and half sovereigns to these noble giants, who obsequiously touch their caps and go on before them, making way. To be well known at the Royal Pandemonium is grand. Many a gay spark pays heavily, but cannot succeed, for there is an art in doing this. To be "admitted to the canteen," to have that entrée, is indeed happiness. There, as Lamb says, "earth touched heaven." This select abode is under the stage, and is crowded by lovely burdens; but mark—hither resort the ladies of the stage, enwrapped in cloaks; here is your true bouquet and charm.

Many sigh to enter here, but a strong man, of yet vaster proportions than his brethren, is told off specially to guard. Only "real" gentlemen and friends of the house are admitted. The powers of recognition in the strong men must be carefully kept alive, or they forget old friends in the strangest way. But to reach the stage is bliss, reserved but for very few indeed. The tenderest friendship with the strong men, based on true pecuniary esteem, will not purchase that. Happy warders! Their lives are laid in smooth places; with them it is eternal drink, their friends treating them, from the very pride of that office. Indeed, to be even one of the army of waiters, wearing a flame-coloured jacket, seems almost a competence. Every one loads them with benefactions. At the various brilliant bars they come in for their seizings, in the shape of, I fear, unauthorised draughts. In every corner, too, are little stalls for cigars and trinkets—fans, what not, each controlled by a fascinating and highly decorated shopwoman. With these the white-tied Elegans in their apprenticeship to life, converse easily and with pleasant badinage, so as to be the envy of their friends and despair of young clerks, but have to buy their favours very dearly

—a sovereign for, perhaps, ten minutes' banter, is high. Gold is expected. Everywhere gold and silver is pouring out. The admiring shopboy would give the world to have gold to give away in this fashion.

Hark to M. Breviary's orchestra, full and crashing. The flame-coloured curtains have gone up for the opening of the superb ballet. The Loves of the Water Lilies, with the skies and mountains even, rising behind, with the exquisite colours dazzling, and the waterfall trickling down with a melodious gush. In this department the Royal Pandemonium holds its own: to give the proprietor his due, so does it hold its own also, as the thousand and one limbs group and wind, and fall into artistic shapes to the sweetest music, and the fairy-like dresses glitter. Then a cave opens, and down the centre, from Paradise surely it seems to the boy clerks and shopmen, comes the famous NUDITA, bounding down as if stepping on a cloud. Nudita is from some great Italian house, her services, we are told, being purchased at an enormous sum. These services are certainly of the most amazing sort, and an excess of modesty, which should have been left outside, causes some of us to droop our eyes in confusion. At another time the incomparable Minette, lured at great cost from some French dancing garden, throws us into ecstasies of delight by her diverting piquancies, kicking a supernumerary's hat off with one skilful touch, introducing for the first time to us the archest and most midnight of Paris dances. The best music hall singing, the best tumbling, the best glees sung decorously in black suits and evening dresses—for the tone of the house must be kept up—the best of everything. The army of entertainers behind the curtain is prodigious—no cost is spared. The beggarly shillings that Cox the shopkeeper gives for self and wife surely do not pay for this, neither does the profit on his meagre pint. It is wonderful how it can be done!

Such is the romantic view of the Royal Pandemonium Palace. So it appears to the young mind behind desk or counter, all the day long. It is an enchanting and fascinating temple; and he longs for night to set in, when he can go down with a friend and cheaply learn what life is. To know a real "Pandemonium girl" with that rank, is considered the height of *ton*, that is, provided it be known that he knows one. To this end vast sacrifices are made. To devote the Sunday to taking down one of these young ladies to Greenwich, with a

select party, is what few can attain to. Wan decayed faces, sickly with over drink and over smoke, attest what suffering is undergone in this pursuit. To be able to take a friend past one of the glorious giants in scarlet and blue and receive a gracious nod, that is another goal. A word from a singer, is quite a crown, for it betokens freedom of the stage. Such is the picture of this "well-conducted place of amusement," which is praised in the leading journal, which is open every night, which has firm root in this great metropolis, and which has been so successful, that by and by, we shall have copies multiplied all over the city. Yet for all its admirable conducting, a more deadly or pernicious school of vice cannot be imagined.

There are certain immoral windmills which it would be sheer folly to fight with, and which it would be impossible to control; but it is not too much to say that the Royal Pandemonium Palace, Foreigning-square, has worked the ruin of thousands of foolish boys; has shown them a smooth and expeditious road to destruction, and is doing its work steadily every night, and adding to the many problems by which London is embarrassed. The whole system, in every detail, is conducted on the most demoralising principles. The squandering of money invited at every turn; the bravos dressed up in stage uniform, and who are merely the hired bullies of the place; the affectation of strict decency and order, the very magnificence, are all so many disguises, and add to the fatal character of the show. The Royal Pandemonium Palace is, indeed, no more than a vast *public-house*, "admirably conducted;" but really no more in principle than the humble ale-house, where the fiddler or Ethiopian is introduced to play for the company.

But mark the precious inconsistency of our police and magisterial regulations. If it was known that to such a place Moll Flanders and her companions resorted to meet old friends and make new ones, the licence would be lost for ever. Some of the Haymarket refreshment houses which Moll is fond of patronising, are pursued with merciless rigour, and the owners properly dragged to the magistrate and fined. But with the Royal Pandemonium it is a different story. It is so well conducted that not a dozen or so, but hundreds of Moll Flanderses are invited to assemble, and assemble with exceeding profit to themselves. The police would not for the world bring the excellent proprietor

before the magistrate; for he is unwearied in co-operating with them. Punctually at twelve the house is cleared, it is not kept open a second beyond the time. The gaudy bullies hustle every one out. When the dancing licence is renewed each year, the inspector has not a fault to find with this well-conducted house. To it, unless something be done, and done speedily, we shall owe the *public* recognition of vast undesirable French habits and morals; and it is to the shame of legislation, that such an institution should be protected by the law, which affects to reprove its principle. At this moment, under ordinary magistrates' law, this plague-spot, which is training up so many dozen per night of George Barnwells and Brummagem Lovelaces, might be stamped out. There is a law against the business or pastime that goes on, and even against the "harboursing" or assembling of certain special classes of the community. In other cases this is strictly, and even harshly enforced. But these parties do not keep vast cathedrals blazing with lights and colour, they have not capital, nor do they give large employment, nor do they keep hired bullies—and above all they have not influential patrons, of wealth and rank. A few intelligent policemen, well acquainted with London faces and London figures, would see enough in ten minutes to justify a summons, and a heavy fine; which, repeated persistently, would soon reduce the attractions of the place to good music, fine dancing, exquisite scenery, and of course shut up the place. How the intelligent Frenchman will smile and shrug, when he learns that my Lord Chamberlain cannot lay his finger on places like this—that *really* require his supervision. Royal Pandemonium Palace, indeed. It is a scandal that anything "Royal" should prefix what is merely a factory, busy every night in working up material for bankruptcy, divorce, and police courts, for the hospital, for the grave, and certainly not for heaven.

HERRINGTOWN-BY-THE-SEA.

If you like your sea-side place "au gratin," if you enjoy walking all day on fried bread-crumbs, Herringtown is exactly the sort of place for you; for the small gravel, of which its sea-side terraces are composed, is for all the world like those breadcrumbs on which roasted larks usually recline, and is as aggravating to the mind as it is distressing to the feet.

Fishermen, riding-masters, small men with

enormous telescopes, letters of apartments, keepers of circulating libraries, Ethiopian serenaders, German bandsmen, boot, saddle, to horse, and away to Herringtown-by-the-Sea; for a real live ex-duchess, Princess of Pinchengripzen, has arrived there, and all Cockneydom is hurrying thither. Away, snobs; fly, toadies, fly; for is there not a real duchess daily perambulating the Marine Parade at Herringtown-by-the-Sea? Rejoice, snobs and toadies; for you can now stare at her, and elbow her, and no one can say you nay, and it is something to have been even within twenty yards of a real ex-duchess.

No one respects well-bred ladies of rank more than ourselves. When dignity is meekly and justly worn, we admire the forbearance and self-control of the wearers, and we regard them as not uncommendable rulers of mankind; but whose gorge would not rise at these respectable people at Herringtown-by-the-Sea, crowding round a quiet invalid lady and her children, gazing at her two gigantic and intensely sedate footmen, jostling her dowdy German governess, staring, pointing, whispering, and giggling? It is loathsome, it is vulgar, it is uncourteous, it is snobbish. There is no loyalty in it, for not one of the genteel mob would lay down a chignon or a whisker to serve the ex-Duchess of Pinchengripzen. It is merely a new form of the love of money; for power is only money grown rank, and these idiots run about after a duchess because she typifies wealth, success, and social importance. She might be a Poppo, instead of a good amiable wife: she might be hideous as Sycorax, instead of being fair and comely as she is—the fools would still run, gape, crowd, intrude, and stare, and render the great lady's life a burden to her.

In spite of all this base development of the worst points of the English character, shown even by the clergy at Herringtown (toadies too), who actually strike up God Save the Queen when this poor quiet lady tries to steal softly as a mouse, unobserved, out of the church, Herringtown is a pretty and pleasant place. It is mighty pretty of an autumn morning before breakfast, with the surf creaming along the shore, the ocean of a delicious aquamarine colour, melting into sapphire; the fishing boats getting greyer as they recede towards the horizon; the ruins of the old Norman castle rising golden on the cloudy cliff; a German band clashing in some distant square, and melted into enchanted music; pretty nursemaids and their rosy charges, laughing and chasing; and, at the great weather-beaten capstan on the Parade, a gang of brown old sailors and sturdy sailor-boys working in a collier brig, that is going to discharge her cargo; while yonder, on the beach, a man tosses up spadefuls of wet silt, that in the morning sunlight flash like diamond dust.

I have a disagreeable suspicion, though, founded on some continental observation, that, spite of the innocence of this tranquil little place, the ex-Duchess of Pinchengripzen, amiable and confiding as she looks, has a

mind not unclouded with the old Pinchengripzen fears. I am convinced that she has given orders to be strictly watched, although in an unobtrusive way. There they are; I know their steely eyes, hard mouths, and askance looks. They can't disguise themselves from me, for I have seen them all before in the Unter den Linden, on the Boulevards, in the Prater, in the Königsplatz, on the Boompees. You see that well-dressed, portly city man on the Parade, just by the third seat—city man who has evidently travelled—Spy, revolver in his right-hand pocket! That young swell cross-legged, lavender gloves, bunch of violets in his button-hole, holding Maltese dog by a purple ribbon, while he carelessly swings a sword-stick—Spy. Remark that old feeble clergyman, with black worsted gloves, one hand on a Bath chair, which contains fat woman in black—Spy—revolver up the small of his back—Spy double distilled. Look at that jolly red-faced bourgeois on the seat by the great hotel, who draws you into conversation about Pinchengripzen politics (may they be accursed!)—Spy again, hot from Scotland Yard yesterday, and just off the Fenian business, came by last boat from Cork. He is better known as Sergeant McDonald, and a very sharp hand; I see him smile when the idiotic crowd, not having a clear notion of what the ex-Duchess of Pinchengripzen is like, close round her children's German governess, or her butler's wife and two big footmen, and are just as happy as if the old dowdy hag were the real ex-Duchess herself. Innocent happy people that we are, the greater part of us do not know a spy when we see him.

It has been a tremendous night. When I got up this blessed morning, the gusts of rain were driving past the window at the rate of fifteen thousand miles an hour, and the wind was roaring like a wild beast round the corners of the Parade. The snobs will have a miserable day of it, for the ex-Duchess of Pinchengripzen will not show. The spies will have a glorious time of it at pool, for there will be no one to watch but each other.

"Fine herrings—fresh and fine O—Herr-r-r-r-r-rings!" shouts a weather-beaten old fisherman, with one eye; he wears a yellow oilskin sou'-wester, and an orange-brown short smock, peculiar to Herringtown fishermen, colour not unbecoming, as toning down the superabundant brick-brown of their hardy complexions. His trousers have been artfully framed out of stubborn cloth, and are of enormous width, as if the owner expected to grow more corpulent. The hardy Norseman answers my hail, and brings his tray to the door. Small silvery whiting, gently reposing side by side; silver-spangled herrings, with red inflamed eyes, as if they had been taking too much, and mouths wide open as if they had died screaming "murder;" a bland featureless plaice or two; a hideous John Dory. The hardy Norseman drips with excessive rain.

"Rough night? well, rather that way. Hard life for them as toils all night; terrible

ocean, lathery with froth; but no effects. At last I ask a group of fishermen smoking stolidly, in a sort of glum parliament, under the black side of a small lugger, drawn up on the beach.

"Have you, my good men, seen anything of this large Indiaman that they say is likely to be driven on shore?"

The men look at me with horny eyes. They make no reply. One ruffian thrusts his tongue into his hideous cheek. The rascals shake their heads, and, as I move on, a disgustingly impertinent boy feeding a donkey by a cabstand couches his forehead with assumed idiocy, and, looking steadily out at sea, dances a double shuffle on the shingle, thrusts his hands in his pockets, and sings something about "Not for Joe." Who's Joe? Then all the other smugglers and villains laugh boisterously, and one lubberly villain, lying flat on the shingle, pretends to swim violently on shore.

I walk away disgusted at the degradation of our lower orders, and sneer mentally at universal or any other sort of suffrage. As I enter the town by Jones-street, I meet the deceiver of the morning in high spirits. He is sold out—nothing left in his baskets, but a smear of red, and half a dozen silver spangles. I stop him and interrogate him bluntly.

"Well, sir," he says, "I confess it was a bit of a stretcher; but there *was* a Green's Indiaman me and my mates spoke in the night, and, Lor' bless you, the Lonnon gents here do like them yarns about the dangers of the seas, and so we fatten them up with 'em—we make a point of it—and besides (here he winked slowly at me with his blind and leaden eye), don't ye see, it *helps to sell the fish*."

So passed away my morning's dream at Herringtown; so, too, have passed away many dreams that have lasted men their whole lives.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG: A SHORT SERIAL STORY.
CHAPTER XVII.

HERE are some of this fry who do not scruple to inhale the scent of the gambling flowers, to walk on the gambling walks, to sit down, as I see they do now, on the gambling seats. A benevolent father, according to the stage phrase, portly, puffed, and placid, enjoying these scandalous blessings, as he sits between his two children, he is, no doubt, quite satisfied with himself and them. "It is really very pleasant, all this sort of thing, and the people here do it very nicely, very nicely indeed—so much good seems to be done." How I remember them—those nice girls, for one of whom I put down her money. It gave me a thrill to see her, for no doubt, good as she was, she had led me into this fatal fit. I turned back to avoid them, but they rose and followed me.

"Come here, Mr. Austen, we want to speak to you," said the portly father.

The young girl, Constance, was beside me.

"O, we have been looking for you everywhere, and, indeed, we were so sorry to hear that you have been unfortunate."

This was free and easy. She would have called the mislaying of her gloves a misfortune.

"Has it been so talked about?" I answered, bitterly; "I thought that losing was the ordinary condition of things here. It is no nine days' wonder, I presume?"

"No, indeed," she said gently; "but we were looking on, and then we heard from Mr. D'Eyncourt—"

"O, he talks of me, does he? What right has he to concern himself with my affairs? He is not my friend—as it is, he has meddled too much already, and I am not going to put up with it, even in this place, where so much can be put up with."

"Then it *is* true?" she said, looking at me with alarm; "and I reproach myself bitterly, as it was my foolish eagerness that led you on to it."

I did not know what answer to make to her. But her father came up and said,

"Come, Mr. Austen, we are English in a foreign land, and that should draw us together and make us excuse each other. I may be as free surely to you as I would wish you to be to me. Go, dear, and walk a little, I want to ask our friend something."

"I have no secrets. I should not care if the whole collection in this—" I was beginning excitedly when he stopped me.

"Now, let us talk sensibly; first of all, don't imagine any offence is meant to you; and, secondly, don't fancy that I am to be offended. I am a plain, straightforward, English gentleman, and like my own way when I have anything in my head. We have a lord whom all our country bench is in terror of, but I don't care a button on that frock coat for him."

"And how do these private matters of yours concern me?" I asked.

"Just listen; I don't know what you may have lost, whether little or much, that is no affair of ours, nor of the mob gathered here; but really there is something so strange in your appearance, something so full of despair, that every good person must be distressed by it."

"They have surely no business with me, or with my looks—"

"I am really afraid, even as a mere stranger, lest your health, or worse, your

mind, be affected; such wildness in your eyes, I would caution you to take care. Now, do listen to me," he added earnestly; "the truth is, we all noticed and watched you from the beginning, that is my girls and I; they thought you were something like a poor brother of theirs, though I don't see it. Then that dean told us something about you and that pretty creature you have at home, and the sickness and the going away, and all that. So you see we read it like a story book."

I was getting tired of all this, and answered, I confess, rather rudely. "Every one thinks themselves entitled to meddle with my affairs."

"Now," he went on, "let us look at this like two Englishmen. I tell you this will be a bad business. My girls and I, we know this place by heart, and the people, and the diseases, for we have been coming here many years. I tell you that the only course for you is to leave, and leave with us, this very day, by the four o'clock train. We shall take care of you; the girls will talk to you, will keep your mind from thinking. We shall rob you from your own home for three or four days at the least, and send you back to that dear girl of yours a different being from what you are now."

"And then," I said, "do you know what is to follow—can you guess what that home will become when its master returns?"

"Well, as to that, also, I wish to speak to you. If your money loss has not been very considerable, I should be glad to help you to replace it."

I was touched with his generosity—these were no mean platitudes; but all this only added to my degradation. A mere stranger, like one who has seen some squalid beggar in the street, and is, of course, privileged to ask the story, the minute details, and then in return, offers his coppers. Thank God, I have not fallen quite so low as that!

I declined civilly and coldly. I was in no such violent hurry to go, neither was I quite so weak as he imagined. I could fortunately control myself, I said, in presence of the danger, and more fortunate still, had no money to throw away. I made him a bow, and went away. He had not found me so easy to settle, as he had once done the county lord on the magistrates' bench.

Yet my heart turned towards his daughters and their gentle invitation, and I thought again and again wistfully of the tempting programme he had laid out. The

horrid monotony of the day, dragging on, and dragging me with it, was something terrible to return to. It seemed endless; and the wearing equilibrium and suspense of another day was something to shrink from. I wanted to rush away into the world—anywhere; but my gold, my gold, kept crying to me from its prison. I might as well have just dropped a hundred gold pieces in the street, and have tried to pass on without picking them up.

And yet I felt it was the only thing, the only salvation. The wild, horrid dream or nightmare in which I was writhing and groaning must be broken through, if I could but awaken in the pure, innocent air.

There was their gambling music coming dulled through the trees; it made me shiver again. I could see the colours glittering among the leaves in the old sickening promenade; there is a devil in every one of these objects—band, fiddlers, players, all combined to drive me frantic.

I heard a gentle voice beside me. "Why will you not do," said she—it was Constance alone—"why will you not do as papa says? Indeed you look ill, and so feverish and excited. Do be advised by me. I have had my little losses recollect, and under your guidance; so I have a claim on you, and—you will come with us I know?"

"And leave my money to these swindling scoundrels—make them a present of it? I can't, I won't; you don't know, or can't know. I can't go—I dare not stay. O was there ever such a pitiable condition?"

"Yes," she said, softly, "many thousand times worse—you might be a thousand times worse. You should do as papa says. Once out of these dense clouds everything will seem bright, and natural, and rational. Do come, we will be so pleasant."

Again the satanic music came muffled through the trees, and made every fibre in my frame jar—sent a panic into my very brain, called up the whole hateful scene again. I saw the conspirators stripping victims, with the dull wearing monotony going on like eternal punishment. I could not stand *more of that*.

"Oh, let me go!" I said, I fear very wildly. "Oh, let me go with you—do, I conjure you!—anywhere! Let me go away out of this; if I stay it will kill me!"

She said they would call for me at half-past three. I walked home rapidly. Yes, it was assuredly all for the best. The moment that firm resolution was taken, it was

amazing how the clouds began to break. Yes, I would do as she said. The end was certain. But there was a reprieve of a week, at the least. Heaven might then send grace, or a remedy. Can those wise men, who are always preaching, or *canting*, in books, about waiting and putting your trust in something beyond this world, or who tell us that the darkest hour is the one before day—can they be inventing? Surely not. They must have known some instances. Who can tell or guess at the depths of arrogance and self-sufficiency? and the taste for instructing your inferiors may have blinded them to truth itself. However, it is a reprieve. The mere perverse eccentricity of human events may work out a remedy, just as it so often works out a disease. We hear of people *struggling* with adversity which is checking them at every turn. Why are there none whom *prosperity* treats in the same way? Simply because Satan is abroad, walking the earth, and delights in that game. . . . How strange are these theories of mine—with a certain acuteness; but all *that* is gone now. What a wreck and waste of abilities! I may say that now, speaking of myself as of another, and as any one turning over these pages in a century hence may remark. It will have all *ended somehow* long before that. . . . Those were good charming girls, but they are part of the luxuries of life. I suppose that one—Constance—has gone home to say *she* persuaded me—a pardonable and girlish vanity for which I do not blame her. It was *I* who, in reality, suggested the train of thought. She did not know what I was thinking of and dreading—that lonely journey home, the deadly imprisonment in the railway carriage. It was a welcome deliverance, that resource. . . .

Two o'clock.—I feel so much more tranquil now. So much rest—a sort of unnatural calmness, and the waves seem to have gone down about me. A little exertion and force of will has done this. It is surprising how much *that* is under control, even under the most desperate circumstances. I could tell some of these despairing gamblers, who think they are utterly wretched—that nothing is left for them—that Fate is capricious; that, when they have left fifty miles of country between them and this place, the thing will assume quite another aspect, the loss will dwindle down into a misfortune that *may*, by some agency, unknown but still possible, be repaired. If people could only be

brought to look at things rationally, calmly, as I do now, how the flame colour would fade out, how the angles and rough edges would be smoothed away! Yes, I feel quite tranquil now, prepared for the worst; but still, not without hope. Here do I now repeat Dora's little prayer, which comes appropriately for one starting on a journey like me:

"O Lord! Thou who dost guide the ship over the waters, and dost bring safe to its journey's end the fiery train, look down on me in this distant land. Save me from harm of soul or body; give me back health and strength, that I may serve Thee more faithfully, and be able to bring others dependent on me to serve Thee also, and add to Thy glories! Amen."

Six o'clock.—When I said that prayer first, I little thought—no matter now. Everything is packed. Let me go! Heaven forgive those who sent me here to reap this crop of wretchedness! What have I done to deserve this? . . . There is the cab. . . . I met them at the station, and fortunately escaped falling in with Grainger; of course it will be said that I feared him. That would be a falsehood that I would cram down the throat of any man who said it. The false world has but one way of reading everything. If you are delicate and considerate, you are *afraid*. I wished to have peace, to get away in quiet, I did on my soul, even though there might be demons dressed up in the livery of guards and porters. The two girls and their father were there. He had his hand out, as it were patronising a school boy who had behaved well.

"Well done," he said, "I admire you for this. My Constance is never to be resisted when she has set her mind on a thing."

The world again—it assumes everything to be *its* work. Something happens after something that *it* did. Ergo, it was the cause.

"We have a nice carriage," he went on, "and we shall so enjoy ourselves. I declare I am quite in spirits again. Even now I am sure you think it a trifle—what's a hundred or two to happiness—to English home and beauty—you'll work it off in a few months. Strong hands, sir, and strong hearts do everything."

Work it off in a few months! That was his friendly scheme. Had all his generosity melted away into *that*—not that I cared—or that I would not have taken up his money,

had he laid it down on the seat, and flung it back to him. It is easy to preach, and tell the galled jade *not* to wince. I made no such reply as *that* to him—for in truth I had some sense as of being released. Indeed, I thanked him for his kindness. It is only *now* that I see what he was at. Then he said, wringing my hand, "I think so much of you for this. You are a fine character, Mr. Austen!" There was a letter of hers—Dora's, which I had not yet read, nor had I time to read. A harassed, persecuted man has enough to occupy his baited soul, without being brought to an account for having lost a second—a breach of affectionate duty, and all that. I suppose the characters are not written in invisible ink and will not fly away. If I loved a friend to distraction I would say to them all the same, "For God's sake, don't whine!"

"I had such a dream about you last night, darling—such a frightful *real* dream! With all that money in your keeping, and belonging to another, and with the temptations of that frightful place! Oh, come back—come back to us at once! And, oh! if you feel the least temptation—and, dearest, it is *no harm* if you do—at that moment fly—leave everything behind rather than incur the danger. Then, too, you may be thinking of us, and of what is to meet you at home. That is dismal enough, I feel; but an honest stainless heart will bear us through all. Mr. Bernard, besides, has the same idea; and he really frightened me yesterday, for you know what an inflexible man he is, and he prides himself on it. Here were his words, which I thought I ought to repeat for you: 'I am sorry I put such a temptation in his way now. Had I thought he would have taken to lecturing, he should never have had it. But I warn you, Mrs. Austen, if there is anything wrong, I shan't spare him. I shall make no distinction between him and a poor man; and he would be ten times as guilty.' I told him, with scorn, that he did not know you, nor know me, and that his suspicion dishonoured us both. He said that any tampering with money would be a greater dishonour, and went away a little displeased."

Anything wrong! A fine way of pleasing the man—instead of soothing him, when, God knows, I want all indulgence and mercy, to go inflaming him against me with defiant speeches. Always the way—

no help even at home; enemies there! And such folly! Suppose I *did* want the money?

"I thought I would even rush to the telegraph office, and let you know at once. The whole so frightened me, and seemed—forgive me, dearest—so natural and probable. No crime indeed for you—what so many good people have done and repented of."

Run to the telegraph office! They seem to have money enough to think of such freaks and extravagances, while I am hunted and harried down to the very wall here, and the only relief I get is to be lectured; lectured by every fool that walks the right way.

O why did I not go with them? Who is now the greatest fool that walks the highway—the greatest malefactor in this den of malefactors? No; but these girls would go on with their foolish chatting and curiosity on the platform, instead of taking their seats. Or did they do it on purpose? All had been well! But the demons must pursue me here: or were they *his* agents? That father, with his platitudes, must go walking up and down, until that captain comes up eagerly.

"All but late," he cried out joyfully; "but it had been no harm if I was."

"Well, I warned you, my dear boy."

"So you did, but luckily I did not mind. Feel that coat-pocket, and that—literally bursting. I crammed them all in, notes, silver, gold, everything, anyhow."

My heart began to beat. The old infernal music was striking up, the black imps clanging their cymbals. The girls came to him. I saw the light in their eyes.

"Why you had lost everything, Captain Conway?"

"Five hundred pounds, as I have a commission, which should have been sold next month to meet expenses. In fact, the letter has gone to the agents. But I'll stop 'em by telegraph at Frankfort. Just passing that infernal Cure house—or, I beg its pardon, what *was* that infernal place?—in my cab. Portmanteau on the seat opposite. Something—I don't know what it was—prompted me to stop. I rushed in. Something—I don't know what, but I never did it before—made me ask the croupier, 'Zero been up lately?' 'Not for a half-hour,' he said. Something else—God knows what—made me give him a couple of double fredericks. 'Put that on,' I said. 'Look sharp, too.' On it went. Click, flop; and, by Jove, you should have seen the

bundle of gold and notes that came to me!"

My chest was heaving, my eyes, I suppose, growing wild. There was the persecuting perverseness! Why should I have to listen to all this? Just to torture me. Could they not let me leave in peace?

"Come," said one of the girls, "and look at this great engine, the one that is to take us. Do explain it to me."

Here was folly at full growth. I could not be left in peace to listen to a dramatic story like this—was it not what I always proclaimed! Let any one look back on these pages and find the proof there. But I was argued out of it, hectoring, lectured by complacently pious people.

I heard him going on.

"I took out twenty napoleons and piled them thickly about the lucky Zero, on the square, on the corners, faith, in any way that they would fit at all. Plastered all well down. Round it went again—click, I declare if it wasn't Zero again!"

My foot went down on the asphalte with a stamp of agony. "I knew it," I cried! "there are instincts in these things, and they are the fools who shut their eyes and ears."

"I don't know about that," he said; "but Zero is the boy, and I have always said it. He sticks to you if you stick to him."

"It is notorious," I said; "but it is cruel, scandalous. No one here can be let alone—persecuted—worried. It is others who cause all the ruin, not you."

"Not me," he repeated, looking at me with surprise, "of course not. I declare they took a couple of minutes counting and paying me. I suppose I have all my own back, and about two hundred and fifty profit. Then I thought I would try again, but time was up, so I came off."

The father smiled. The good are always indulgent to success. He didn't smile at me when I was miserable.

"Well, all's well that ends well. I am glad you saved yourself."

"I wish I had stayed now," said the captain. "I could have come on by a late train. They said it was all going on the low numbers."

"There now," I said, hurriedly. "Yes there would be a run of high ones, with a tendency to get back to the low ones, which would bring up Zero again. It is certain—morally certain. I have seen it happen over and over again."

"Too often, my dear friend, I am afraid," said the smooth father, taking my arm. "There's the bell, and I am not sorry."

I shook myself free. "My luck, my old luck—the demoniac trap, just to get me away at the very moment I might be successful. Am I to be the only one robbed—every one to go off laughing and smiling, but me? It is the righteous dispensation the parsons preach."

"Oh, what folly, my friend, this is! I am ashamed of you."

"Then let there be one rule—let there be fairness, even in this villany. I won't be singled out for ruin, and despair, and death, and let every one else escape. I am not to be the only one robbed, while every one else gets their money——"

"Take your seats, gentlemen! Mount!"

"My dear Austen, you promised me," said he, "you know you did."

I remembered my politeness. Thank Heaven, it cannot be said I was so much the slave of my persecutions as to forget my self-control.

"I shall be very glad to join you at Frankfort by the next train. I have indeed been so hurried, I have forgotten a dozen things."

"A wretched excuse," he said—"quite transparent—that can impose on no one."

The guard was at the next carriage, "banging" his way down.

"Mount, gentlemen—mount!"

Was it some providence was calling to me? "Mount—mount, for your life!" But I answered, fiercely, "Do you wish to insult me? You think you can speak any way to one in my case. I would not travel with you now if I was insured to win a thousand pounds in gold. No; go your way, and let me go mine."

He did not answer, but, turning away, entered the carriage. They gave me a soft imploring look. Then the door was shut upon them.

"MOUNT, SIR! You are going?"

"I am not going," I said, coldly. Then the whistle shrieked. I thought it was the shriek of the despairing demon, baulked of his prey. O fool!

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read at Wolverhampton, March 4; Manchester, March 6 and 8; Hull, March 10; York, March 11; Hull, March 12. All communications to be addressed to MESSRS. CHAPPELL AND Co., 50, New Bond-street, London, W.